

Patriotic singer wins APG Talent Search contest

*Story and photos by
YVONNE JOHNSON
APG News*

An American Soldier took the stage, sang the song "American Soldier" by Toby Keith then marched away with first place in the Aberdeen Proving Ground Talent Search held at the Edgewood Stark Recreation Center Nov. 18.

The first place winner, Pvt. John McLean, is from Company A, 143rd Ordnance Battalion. Second place went to Pvt. Brian Taylor, Company C, 143rd, who sang a gospel medley accompanied by Jeremiah Harris, Company B, 16th, on keyboard and Pvt. Latrice Bray, Company B, 16th, came in third after performing Yolanda Adam's "Yet Still I Rise."

Sponsored by Morale, Welfare and Recreation, the contest provides talent for the U.S. Army Soldier Show to which the winner receives an automatic recommendation.

McLean, who sang with great emotion and received a standing ovation, said he dedicated the song to his sister and all Soldiers.

"It expresses how I really feel," he said, adding that he soon will be headed to Fort Hood, Texas.

"I felt every bit of it because I know soon I'll be over in Iraq," he said.

A National Guardsman from Durham, N.C., Taylor said that "gospel music just inspires me."

"I feel blessed just to be in the military," he said, adding that he is planning a gospel album due to encouragement from family and fellow Soldiers.

Also headed to Fort Hood, Bray said she chose the inspirational song "because it means everything I've been going through."

She thanked her fellow Soldiers for their support and asked that they "continue to love and support each other."

The program judges included Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar, U.S. Army Research,



The 2006 APG Talent Search winner, Pvt. John McLean, Company A, 143rd Ordnance Battalion, raises his hat in response to the standing ovation he received after singing the song "American Soldier."

Development and Engineering Command; Spc. Nicole Lawrence, Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers representative; Charles Heinsohn, MWR programmer; Cardelia Lee, co-owner of the Ultimate Driving School in Aberdeen; and Shonda E. Rencher, Baltimore talent scout.

Alcivar presented the awards at the program's conclusion.

He thanked the audience for their "enthusiasm" and praised the B.O.S.S. program.

"I am very impressed with the demonstration of talent tonight," Alcivar said. "This was entertainment from the Soldier for the Soldier. Remember B.O.S.S. when you get to your permanent duty



Spcs. Amanda Justice, 389th Army Band (AMC's Own), and Travis Bruyett, Kirk U.S. Army Health Clinic, sing a song written by Justice.

stations. It will only make your time in the Army better."

The master of ceremonies was Sgt. Steven Lah, 389th Army Band (AMC's Own). Courtney White, a U.S. Army Environmental Center computer engineer, gave the invocation and Curtis L. Worsley, a Directorate of Information Management switchboard operator, sang the national anthem.

In addition, White and Worsley gave a guest performance, singing a duet of the song "If This World Were Mine" by Luther Vandross.

The Talent Search contestants included Spcs. Amanda Justice and Travis Bruyett; Pfc. Keyona Gainey, Herman Escobedo and Timothy Harless; and Pvts. Reginal Alfreus, Alyssa Lilua, Storm Pross, Nancee Cowell, Karlynn-Shac'on Joyner, Alicia Carlson, Stephen C. Romero-Williams, Douglas Kitchen and Marvin Parson.

Magician fans in awe during Magictainment Show

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A local entertainer brought his word-renowned Magictainment entertainment show to Aberdeen Proving Ground and wowed the audience at the Post Recreation Center Dec. 2.

David Breth charmed the audience of Soldiers, civilians and family members with card tricks, mind-reading demonstrations and witty humor, as he talked through each illusion.

He also used several volunteers, at one point pulling Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar, APG and U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, from the audience for his 'Egg and Scarf Trick.'

An impressive illusion was when Breth displayed writing on tissue paper, tore the paper into pieces, rolled it into a ball, squeezed it together, then unrolled it, revealing its restored condition.

The crowd favorite was easily the disappearing act at the end when Breth handcuffed his assistant, Lindy, tied her up in a sack and placed her in a trunk then locked it on four sides. He then jumped on top of the trunk, pulled up a black curtain, covering himself from head to toe, and then dropped it, revealing not himself but his assistant Lindy, who promptly unlocked the trunk to reveal a sack in which a handcuffed Breth waited.



Dressed as superheroes, 'Chicken Nugget' and 'Super Chicken' Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar, U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, left, helps Magician David Breth, right, with an egg and scarf trick during the Magictainment Show at the Aberdeen Proving Ground Recreation Center Dec. 2.

"I thought it was good," said Pvt. Cory Jones, Company B, 16th Ordnance Battalion. "It was really entertaining. I've seen some before but most of that was new to me."

Pvt. Mary Elizabeth Lopez, Company C 16th, said she enjoyed the entire show.

"I love it," she said. "I especially liked the part where he turned into a girl."

"I'm not a big fan of magic but it was pretty cool," added Pvt. Sharayah Guarriello, Company A 16th.